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No. XXVIII. — "THEORETICAL RELIGION."

General's Letter.
TO THE SOLDIERS
SALVATION ARMY
WORLD.

My Dear Comrades,
Are we practical people after all? We say we are. We profess to measure ourselves by the good actually accomplished. But are we what we seem? Are we really? My mind is agitated on the subject.
Nothing is worse — we feel that nothing can very well be more abominable to God and angels, and we are sure that nothing can be more abhorrent to ourselves than shame and make-believe. We hate them with a hatred that we believe is divine. We have said so before; we are always saying so, and we shall go on saying so, because we feel it in our bones.

In this hatred at least we have Jesus Christ for our pattern. He was — as we all know — pitiful and lenient to thieves and publicans (tax-gatherers — not drunk and makers, mind), and poor harlots, but he had no mercy on the pretended religionists about him. He unmasked their hollow hypocrisy, called them hard names, spoke of them as a generation of poisonous snakes, and wondered how it was possible for the mercy of God to reach them; and wondered by what possible means they could manage to escape the damnation of hell.

Do you see me, my comrades, why the Pharisees excused this bitter enmity of the Master? I answer because it was a mere pretence — a hollow form, an empty ceremony, they did their religion as it were by machinery, and they knew it.

They had a theory which they did not practically carry out; used religion and the name of God and saved things to minister to their own selfishness and temporal interests. They traded on the overrating hopes and fears that are born in men's souls, for the sordid purpose of making gain and reputation and position. They were a gigantic hypocrisy. Hence His hatred — His denunciation — His withering scorn.

We can understand this, my comrades. It was perfectly natural for the Son of God to feel thus. — We feel when we fashion ourselves into all wicked lives — contradict the theories of truth; if his life was a continual falsehood? Or a man who was constantly engaging in dishonesty while known to be a practical thief? Or a boaster in the beauty and value of benevolence when he is wanted to be a practical miser? Or a politician who was always showing how his reforms and plans and methods would mend the condition of things, who would visit with power and possessed of the opportunity, bettered nothing?

If then theory, unaccompanied by practice, is such an abomination in God's eyes, what must be he when combined with these eternal questions which are measureless in value?
What shall we say of religious people who say they love God and worship at His feet and still hold the same theory, and do not even pretend to keep His commandments?
Or what shall we say of those who call themselves Unitarians who say they are disciples of Christ — and yet will follow Him one yard further than where all is pleasant and smooth; who never for a moment dream of going with Him to the Wilderness, to Gethsemane or to the Cross to save the souls of men?
Or of those who say they believe in Hell and would send anybody there if they could who did not hold the same theory, and yet in practice will not part with the luxuries of life, or endure the smallest hardship in order to save the souls of the poor sinners about them from going there?

Oh, my comrades, this holding truth in theory, and not working it out in practice is evil. My soul is agitated about it. Do we stand clear ourselves? Let us look at our lives and answer to God for ourselves.
What is the end of a religious organization? What is it for? To maintain the name of God? Well, we suppose that is very important, but we fancy He could maintain His name and fame in the earth without us. For the offering up of worship and praise? Very good, but we suppose that is not all. The great purpose must be to convert and carry out and complete the work that Christ began of saving the world from its black rebellion, delivering it from the power of the forces of hell and bringing it back to God.

Let us measure the religious organizations by this standard. Surely no one naming the name of Christ can object to that. Salvationists cannot and will not. Let the standard lie. Apply it fairly. What is the result?

Men measure the worth of earthly organizations by the extent to which they secure the end for which they are instituted. Take a fire brigade establishment, for instance. This would be nothing, anyway, people would say so, if not practical. They might paint the fire-engine all the colors of the rainbow, put the fireman into blazing uniforms and glittering helmets; give them a thousand lessons in all the secrets of their business; show them how to manipulate their engines and hose and ladders and hand-buckets and all the paraphernalia

who are being literally swallowed up in this flame.

Yesterday was Sunday. Oh, what talking and preaching! Oh, what observations and cruelties and religious doings in general there were! It is so far as stopping the burning that is going on about us — the terrible burning that is consuming so much happiness and blackening and charring — so many poor souls, what was done?

My comrades, never mind other people. Take your own life. The streets of our Christian cities are full of harlots at midnight. They tell me that in this city in which I write — which has been lately said to be the most religious city in the world — there are eighty thousand of these poor creatures.

And who cares?
Our prisons are full of criminals. I use London prison alone there is always an average of a thousand detained women.

Who cares?
All over Christendom thousands of little children are being brought up in actual training for crime. Unless death interferes they are certain to become criminals, and equally certain to be damned.

Who cares?
At the corner of almost every street in the cities where the Christian live there is a trap to catch and ruin souls — a trap beautifully lit and fitted and painted and baited.

are on their way to perdition; not the drunkards and the lechers and the criminals alone, but the Christless respectable and especially according to the Christ by whom the Christians swear — the people who hold the theory of religion and do not practice it. For them, according to the Master, is reserved the hottest damnation of all.

Who cares?
If there is a triple murder — a fire — an earthquake — a famine — by which a few men, women, and children die, going out of life without a struggle, what a loss and cry there is! What a sensation.

But here, come and listen! Hark! to the march of millions to endless misery! Tramp tramp tramp! There they go — from every land, more especially the Christian land, for God's bowels of compassion must move towards the heathen multitudes — through every town, down every street, from every home, the children, the fathers and mothers, the aged ones — on they go — up to the Judgment Seat and then down to Hell!

My comrades, it must be so. The Salvation Army has not discovered this state of things to make people unhappy. Bibles and bishops and ministers and every body else says so — in theory. But who cares, and whose practice is in keeping with their faith? Where are we, we Salvationists? I am agitated about the matter. Where am I? Where are you, dear comrades?

I must pause for reflection.
Farwell till next week. Meanwhile put the question to your hearts.

OWEN SOUND.

Praise God for victory; messengers good all this week. Sinners feeling their need of a Saviour, and

Five precious souls ventured out, and Jesus burns the bonds that bound them to Satan, and still we are not satisfied.
Cadet Brown for Capt. Churchill and Lieut. Pearce.

KINCARDINE.

I arrived here on Saturday night, found the Lieut. sick in bed. Praise the Lord he is getting better.
At 7.30 we went out on the march. Cadet and I alone. Had 18 people inside. On Sunday we met the devil in full array; he tried hard to wreck our meetings, but praise the Lord! he over- shot his mark and lost the victory.
Pte. John Kirby for Lieut. Gratton. Cadet Danes.

WATERDOWN.

Victory through the Blood of Christ. The devil being defeated and his servants dexterating him. Hallelujah!
One Precious Soul, who was deeply dyed in sin, tormented by his wicked ways, and is now serving God with a clean heart. We are determined to take Waterdown for Jesus.
Capt. Sweetman, Cadets Danes and Thomson.


WILL YOU SEEK

—AND—
SAVE THE LOST.

(By Colonel Booth.)
"But I do not feel it is my calling." "It is not my work to seek this class." Perhaps there is nothing more common than to hear such answers on the part of many who pressed to go down to raise some fallen one or to seek some one out, and it would seem that such had forgotten the words, "Hear ye perceive we love of God, because He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." Yet these "patrons," many of whom are anxious, will most readily admit that such a mission is the call and burden duty of some, such as their officers or the servants of the corps, their minister or class-leader, and thus tens of thousands — whose broad path to destruction might be blocked with saving hindrance, and whose oft course to ruin might be checked by some prayer of faith or message of truth — rush on to the gulf of despair! But they are responsible, and responsible run round, or rather run over, it is their mission — your mission. Why has God made his altar of mercy accessible? That you may take the guilty there, and pray with them. Who spilt His precious blood? That you may take the polluted to the precious fountain to be cleansed. Why promised His Spirit? That in His Might, you may raise up your voice of warning to the hardened and impenitent men. Oh, go out and find these who grope in the night of sin. You will not have far to look in our towns as well as cities. Look along your streets. Among the fashionable you will see the poverty-stricken. Rush into the strongholds of sin and bring them out — out from the houses of extravagance, and profligacy and vice. You will soon discover, brother, yet.

Heart-rending Realities to deal with. Go yourself. Stand up Saturday night, and then behold the dogm trodden.
Sin scarred ones about you! Ob! for God's sake GO SEEK THEM OUT!
But beyond the work of finding these outcast ones, the responsibility of their salvation rests upon us. We have no faith in any restoration or reformation that is not accompanied with genuine conversion, and we use it to be useless to hope for any happiness or permanent results where there is not DIVINE CHANGE OF HEART. We must make thorough-going, earnest efforts to save souls. Ingenious brutes, willing hands, and loving hearts are no device multitudes of means for reaching and rescuing men and women, but all that fails short of leading them to definite change of heart, and renewal of life are comparatively fruitless and worthless. Not our powers and energies more than ever be concentrated upon this one thing of getting these men saved.
It is appalling how little feeling of responsibility some people have for the conversion of souls. One sometimes wonders whether they believe in conversion at all. I remember Mrs. Booth speaking of being in a sickroom once, and hearing a Scripture reader say a few words to a sinner, and noticing his manner of being there, and his change of heart. "Now who would ever imagine this young man was talking with a soul upon the most momentous of all occasions, and at the most awful crisis of his life?" He looked as if he were dead, when Mrs. Booth suggested that the sick man would probably like to hear him, he shuttled out at it. And we ourselves have seen thousands such, who never make any real soul appeal to people's souls, or despair of it let it get them to confess their sins, and work for forgiveness of sins, and get the love of a man's life, in disturbing of his feelings.

Have you made one special effort this week to get any of them saved?



PICK THEM UP.

Thousands of souls are being lost every day. Your own brothers and sisters.

RESCUING THE FALLEN.

of their craft. But if they did not put out the fire, and rescue the hundreds and thousands of children from the blazing buildings, the citizens would count them a dissonance, the justice would always them with manslaughter, and would for them if the mob did not tear them to pieces. They would say, "We don't care about your soul, but we care about your money, and you are to us to sit out free and save life!"
I fancy the angels of Heaven, my comrades, measure our religious organizations very much after this fashion. If I am not mistaken, the great King who sits upon the Throne says, in heart, of us all, "What good are you with all your methodical agencies and talk and banter and professions, if you don't put out the fire? If you do not stop the terrible burnings and rescue the poor sinners

Who cares?
The breweries and distilleries in all the Christian lands pour out their millions of barrels of liquid damnation to quench the Christian thirst, besides only so much more for the heathen. And every one of the manufacturers know this too.
Who cares?
And the churches and good ministers and the Christians and the Salvationists know this too.
Oh, my comrades, what do our theories say? Again I say, never mind what they say. What do our Bibles and sermons, our prayers, our religion, our theories — what do they all say? They say the millions around us — the hundreds of millions, the thousands of millions —

Who cares?
Believe me, your affectionately,
WILLIAM BOOTH.
CANNINGTON.
We find a real lot of kind friends in Cannington, and may God bless them in our prayer. Cadet Smith farwelled this week, and good correction rested on the people. We have not many Soldiers here, but, bless the Lord I have some, always found at their post. Good soldiers; and we believe we will have a real Blood and Fire Corps here soon. Pray for us. Soldiers going in the fountain means victory.
Two prisoners for the week, Capt. Cathart and Wife, Cadet Fletcher.

ANOTHER LIE.
Whereas the Toronto News has published, and other papers have copied, and many letters, the following:
"It is stated that the Major of the Salvation Army has offered to provide the masters with all the laborers they require. The strikers think it strange that an organization composed entirely of workmen, and supported entirely by workmen, should take such a stand.
It is known also all men that it takes the Major all his time to get answers from the men who follow the Army. If he had anything to say in reference to the strike and the strikers, it would be get answers, after the manner of a man, and not like a God who says after you have asked him."
(Exchanges please copy.)

